

Pickett Road Neighborhood Meeting

Written Comments

It has been too convenient for dumping of stoves, car batteries, couches, refrigerators, etc. The hill makes barreling through extremely dangerous and for some reason vans loaded with children even go at an undeniable clip. Hiking along is not fun by the traffic; not a peaceful park setting at all and then the animals killed. A couple deer have been hit by the speeding cars; as I said like a major thoroughfare—not at all like the nature preserve so many have worked for.

Closing the road will make a better park but will make Randolph Road traffic worse. Please tie the timing to adding a signal at Randolph and Erwin Roads.

As a resident of the neighborhood and supporter of the park—I have hiked there for years—I am strongly in favor of closing Pickett. However we must acknowledge the growing traffic issues on Randolph. I would encourage a re-examination of the traffic levels, given the new neighborhoods (particularly Carrilon), and reconsideration of a signal at Randolph and Erwin.

I am a resident of Pickett Road across from the Pennys at the top of the hill where the road squeezes together (reduces to 2 lanes) making it dangerous to the unaware driver or teens and utility, construction trucks of all sizes, moving vans and trash/refuse trucks. On the average, there is a speeding problem. To be honest, the teachers and parents of Trinity school drive way too fast for their and their children's safety. Three cars with teens in separate incidents have had severe accidents at the crest of the hill (have flipped over). There have been accidents with the increased deer population. In spite of signs installed, the dumping continues with amazing variety, from construction refuse from the local developments, to folk "knowing" where to dump computers and furniture. *(Teen accidents over the last three years have increased!)

Pickett is a major, connected road going between Erwin Road and crossing many other arteries, ending up close to 15-501. While the entrance at Erwin is gravel, many of us have been waiting for this to be paved. We have not been waiting for it to be cordoned off for only park entrances. Durham Parks may have had this in mind when they bought the site. Those of us living at the intersection of Pickett and Cambridge (e.g. Hope Creek subdivision) do not want to give up our direct access to Erwin Road going towards Chapel Hill. We want Pickett to be improved for that access. Please consider other ways of developing a park and maintaining an existing road for our citizens.

Closing Pickett Road is brilliant!! It is the safe thing to do. 1) Great savings of \$\$s to create a parking lot for New Hope Creek Preserve or Hollow Rock Park on Pickett Road. Less land destroyed. Already some grading exists. 2) I also like public bus transportation additions for this area, and 3) a traffic light at Randolph Road.

First of all, thank you for running a very informative and efficient public meeting last night at Trinity School. Some background information: I have been a homeowner in the Hope Creek neighborhood adjoining Trinity School since 2003. I tromp around regularly in much of the woods that comprise the future Hollow Rock Park. I also drive to work from the Hope Creek neighborhood, and usually use either Randolph Rd or Pickett Rd (eastbound) for travel. I never

drive on the gravel section of Pickett Rd for the reasons I describe below. **I LOOK FORWARD TO THE CLOSING OF PICKETT ROAD AND THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARK IN THE NEAR FUTURE.** Some comments: I believe Pickett Rd is dangerous and should be closed irrespective of the benefit to future Hollow Rock Park development. Pickett Rd suffers from 3 shortcomings: 1) at the intersection with Erwin Rd there are very poor sightlines to northbound Erwin Road traffic. This makes a left hand turn from Pickett onto Erwin very dangerous!; 2) There is a large blind, narrow hill in Picket Rd adjacent to the farmhouse on the north side of the road. Drivers approaching this hill from either side cannot see if any traffic is coming from the other direction, and the passage is so narrow that there is little room for error. There have been several accidents at this spot since I have lived in the Hope Creek neighborhood; and 3) Picket Rd is composed of gravel which makes traction poor under the best of dry conditions, and even more hazardous when it is wet. Construction vehicles and other heavy trucks create large ruts in the road surface and render it again very hazardous to traffic. I do acknowledge that the increased traffic onto Randolph Rd as a consequence of closing Pickett Rd must be addressed. It is already very difficult to make a left hand turn from Pickett to Randolph during "peak-traffic" hours. Perhaps a traffic signal at this intersection could alleviate the congestion. I would recommend that the Durham traffic planning authorities do not wait for a vehicle crash or fatality to occur before addressing this dangerous intersection. Thank you for asking for my opinions and comments on this issue. Again, let me restate that **I DO THINK PICKETT ROAD SHOULD BE CLOSED.**

The blue card that I received in the mail from the City of Durham described Yesterday evenings meeting at Trinity School as information/opinion gathering with "the potential closing" of Picket Road. In reality, it seemed more like a sales presentation where all the presenters had already made up their minds. There was no objectivity what so ever. Everyone of your personnel would not feel the impact of the traffic conditions of closing Picket Road. In typical political fashion, once your park was in and the road closed, everyone else would be left in the wake of the damage done without any recourse. While the politicians would say it was the will of the people. But I do not believe this is the will of the people. There was not much representation of the four neighborhoods that would be adversely impacted at your meeting because those communities were not sent a letter describing the seriousness of Picket Road closing. Instead they received an information gathering invitation. This is truly an issue that needs to be voted on, rather than special interest dominated. Additionally, a compromise solution should be presented to help lessen the impact that will be felt. Your office should set at work to get a traffic light installed at the intersection of Randolph and Erwin Roads. Without traffic control at that already busy intersection, when extra traffic is dumped onto Randolph there will be hell to pay. Can you help with this? Please don't kick the can down the road saying it's NCDOT's problem. My first step is in contacting and asking you for help. I plan on pursuing this with the City of Durham as well as other Orange County politicians.

During the recent repavement of Pickett Road, I took the dirt road and was run off the road by a red dump truck coming to the repavement job. The driver was driving VERY fast and came over the hill down the middle. Please close the road at Orange County and Durham County. The recent crime of carjacking makes the road very frightening to be enjoyed as a park. Please consider putting a light at Randolph and Erwin Road.

I support the closing of Pickett for this park. Although, I would like to see more access to public transportation to this area of Durham, specifically Erwin Road and further west on Pickett towards Trinity School.

I wanted to inform you that I fully support the closure of that portion of the road to public vehicle traffic. It's never been a very safe road due to its location off of Erwin Road; a hill on Erwin limits sight distance for cars pulling out of Pickett. In addition, I believe the closure of the road will provide a safer environment for the hikers, bicyclists, and other visitors that we hope will be enjoying the New Hope Preserve/Hollow Rock Access Area. I assume that access will be provided to the one or two residents living off of Pickett Road.

I am for the closing of Pickett for park trails and for biking. I live on Forest Edge and would be happy to see a usable local park with trails. I'd like to see that the road not be closed until the park is ready to begin work.

Very good meeting. Since turning left onto Erwin from Pickett is very dangerous, I favor closing it. A great compromise would be to close it and put a stop light at the intersection of Erwin and Randolph.

I am opposed to closing the unpaved portion of Pickett Road. It is already very difficult to enter onto Erwin Road at Randolph. By currently having two entry points (Randolph and Pickett) onto Erwin Road it does help to ease the congestion. Randolph Road already has a tremendous amount of traffic. Closing Pickett would only create a bigger problem. My suggestion would be to pave the rock portion of Pickett Road and have some parallel parking on each side for the park.

Let's move forward! In addition—CRITICAL need for a traffic light at Randolph and Old Erwin Road. Pickett needs to be closed at Erwin for safety reasons as well as future park development.

I am FOR the closing of Pickett Road through Hollow Rock Park. Too many people drive carelessly not realizing they are on a dirt/gravel road. I live on Cambridge Road and we are well aware of the drug traffic that has taken place on this desolate street with no street lights. It has always had the potential of danger.

Increased traffic (continued/cumulative NEGATIVE) impact to Randolph Road needs to be carefully and fairly considered. In last 15 years, Randolph Road has incurred large increases to its traffic due to: Carillon Forest Subdivision, Trinity School, Garret Farms Phase II, Pending Daniel Farms traffic, traffic from Garret Road onto Pickett, onto Randolph to get to Erwin (and vice versa). Phase I –Yes, Phase II, No due to impact to Randolph Road. Noise pollution and decreased quality of life—residents on Randolph. High impact traffic.

Recommend closing of Pickett Road, contingent on installation of a traffic light at the juncture of Randolph and Erwin, a dangerous intersection that already has serious safety problems (which would increase with additional traffic from Pickett). It should be noted that the traffic at Randolph and Erwin is already increasing because of additional housing being constructed in the area. First, a traffic light needs to be installed at Randolph and Erwin.

Thanks for all the information you and others presented at the meeting at Trinity school. I live on the corner of Pickett and Cambridge. I favor the park. I favor closing Pickett road. I also think it would be a good idea to add a traffic light at the Randolph road - Erwin road intersection. The public meeting was very informative and thanks for hosting it. There is one matter of major concern expressed and supported by everyone in the surrounding communities that was not directly related to closure of Pickett Road. Contrary to the out dated NCDOT traffic study at the Erwin and Randolph Roads intersection, a traffic light is necessary. This intersection is a hazard without the traffic light. The intersection also does not have adequate street lighting. I concur that Transportation should convey our communities concerns to NCDOT. I support the Phase I and Phase II plans for Hollow Rock Park and the closing of Pickett Road in order to facilitate the governmental processes. The portion of Pickett Road proposed for closure functioned as a portion of the historic Hillsborough to Fayetteville Stage Coach Road as well as the path for several historical Indian tribes located along the New Hope and Mud Creek Corridor.

I attended the neighborhood meeting on June 29, 2010, where the closing of Pickett Road was discussed. I live on the corner of Pickett Road and Randolph Road and have in my backyard the Hollow Rock store which according to plans will be placed within the Park. I am very much in favor of closing Pickett Road though traffic will be increased on my corner. The advantage of having such a wonderful park available safely to school children as well as to the general public will outweigh any inconvenience of added traffic. I hope consideration will be given to having a traffic light on Erwin Road at Randolph Road. A turn lane at Kerley Road would be an asset also. Thank you for attending our meeting. You were a true source of knowledge.

I reside on Randolph Road, I am writing in regard to the proposed closing of Picket Road. I am opposed to the closing the road and would prefer the road be left open and in the future improved. I oppose the road closure for the following reason: It will increase the traffic on Randolph Road by approximately 700 vehicles per day. Picket road is needed as a reliever road for increasing traffic traversing from Garret to Erwin. Continued development on Randolph and Garret is in progress and will only exacerbate the crowding. The increasing bicycle traffic on Randolph is a significant safety issue as well. It is an additional impedance to motorized vehicle traffic. This situation will deteriorate with the increased traffic on Randolph and become critical when the proposed bicycle lane on the eastern end on Picket Road is complete. I have no opinion as to the aesthetic or educational value of the wildlife refuge area that the road closure will impact. However, the wildlife in the area have, to date, not been hampered by Picket Road. Picket is one of the oldest roads in the area and the animals have adapted to its presence for several centuries. I see no reason why the current refuge and the road cannot co-exist.

I live in Solterra, a community right off of Randolph, and adjacent to the new forest preserve. It should be abundantly clear that this road must close. It is exceedingly dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists, given the speed that cars drive on it, the limited sight distance, and the incredibly dangerous intersection with Erwin. Tonite a neighbor said she almost 'killed four people' when a car swerved into her lane to avoid a car turning onto Erwin from Pickett. The fact that this turns the new forest preserve into a usable park, as opposed to something that is bisected with a road that puts terror into me and my dogs every time we try to cross it, is just icing on the cake. Of course, this brings to the fore another traffic issue. Erwin Road is being used as a major artery between Durham and Chapel Hill, something it was never designed for. Unless there is some way to reduce traffic on this road, the intersection of Randolph and Erwin will continue to be a problem, and with 20% more traffic on Randolph, that intersection will

become exceedingly dangerous and artery clogging. The city needs to place either a light or a flashing light at that intersection, to make the whole region usable.

I was at the meeting with my wife Susan – we live on the corner of Cambridge Rd and Haven Drive. We feel that the development of Hollow Rock Park would be of tremendous value for the people who live in this general neighborhood and for many more who live in Durham/Chapel Hill. Since the road stump from Erwin Road, not now asphalted and not planned to ever be, is of limited value to the local traffic, it seems like an obvious thing that the scheduled Park project would be totally acceptable and desirable. Surely there must be solutions available for traffic lights e.g. on Randolph Rd/Erwin Rd connection and other arising traffic concerns due to this important Park project. We are enthusiastically supporting your work and applaud the well-planned meeting on this occasion and in the past! Thanks for your efforts!

First and foremost, it appears to me that the Hollow Rock Master Plan Committee and public meeting organizers provided a skewed view at the meeting of the potential impact of closing Pickett Road to through traffic. I believe that I can understand where this was coming from since the majority of the individuals in attendance were, it appears, ardent supporters of the park and would really like to have the road closed except to the degree that it would benefit them and the park. For instance, information was presented that NC DOT has no plans to improve Pickett Road. That may be true, but not due to a lack of desire to do so. According page 7 “Access and Transportation Issues” in the September 2009 “Proposed Master Plan, Hollow Rock Access Area to the New Hope Preserve” document prepared by the Hollow Rock Master Plan Committee, “This section of Pickett Road is a gravel, state-maintained roadway between Erwin Road to the Trinity School entrance, about 1,000 feet south of the park property. The gravel road provides access to two private residences. Durham County’s 1991 Thoroughfare Plan identifies Pickett Road as a “minor thoroughfare,” and NCDOT would like to pave the road, but has received resistance from adjoining landowners.” It appears that it is not DOT who does not want to improve Pickett road, it is adjacent landowners. The information that was presented at the meeting also downplayed the impact of closing Pickett Road on the surrounding roads. In fact, it did not seem that any of the Planning Committee members had even thought about the impact of closing the road and emphasized the potential benefits of a park with Pickett road closed to through traffic. However, the Master Plan document itself includes some very significant issues that must be considered and, in my opinion, resolved before the closing of Pickett Road is further considered. These key points included in the “Cons” section from Page 25: Appendix 5 - Proposed Pickett Road Closure, Pros/Cons Discussion Points (4/10/08) of the Proposed “Master Plan” follow below:

“Connectivity

- West of 15-501, there are only three connections between Erwin Road and Pickett Road; these connections are Pickett, Randolph, and Ridge.

There appears to be little chance of additional connections as new development occurs, and these connections become more important considering the two schools on Pickett Road.

- Subsequent reduction in connectivity is against local policy to support increased connectivity. Access • The immediate adjacent property owner is not Trinity School, and accessibility to the Trinity School will be impacted.
- The use permit for Trinity School may include language to prevent the road closing. • All adjacent properties would need frontage on a public road after the road closing. • NCDOT would

need to issue a driveway permit if the road were closed, but might be opposed to approving such a permit.

Impacts of Traffic Diversion

- Randolph Road and all intersections from Pickett Rd. to Randolph Rd. and to Erwin Rd. do not have the capacity to handle the increased traffic.
- There is not ample storage on Randolph Road to handle an increase in left turns.
- Right turns at Randolph will pose safety issues.”

Thank you for your willingness to listen to additional comments. As you can see, I am very concerned about the potential impact on already bad traffic on the other roads in the area should Pickett Road be closed to through traffic. I believe that I share these concerns with many of my neighbors.